

facing, we strongly believe that the development of America's domestic energy resources is a vital national security priority. We need to take steps to reverse our growing dependence on Middle East oil as quickly as possible. By passing H.R. 4, the Senate will be supporting our troops serving in combat on Operation Enduring Freedom, the American people, and our national security with a comprehensive energy legislation that is desperately needed to diversify the energy supply for our country and chart a course for the future.

The VFW strongly urges the Senate to consider and vote on H.R. 4 as passed in the House in this session of Congress.

Sincerely,

ROBERT E. WALLACE,
Executive Director.

VIETNAM VETERANS INSTITUTE,
October 30, 2001.

MAJOR VETERANS GROUPS ASK SENATE TO QUICKLY PASS ENERGY BILL TO STRENGTHEN AMERICA FOR WAR ON TERRORISM

WASHINGTON.—Major veterans groups—with a combined membership of nearly 5 million—today called on the Senate to quickly pass an energy bill that includes a provision allowing more oil drilling in Alaska to strengthen America's national security and economy for the war on terrorism.

The American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, AMVETS, the Vietnam Veterans Institute and the Catholic War Veterans urged senators to accelerate development of domestic energy resources, including the supplies within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) in Alaska, as an urgent matter of national security.

In letters to Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD), veterans groups asked Daschle to allow the energy bill passed by the House—H.R. 4—to come to a straight majority vote in the Senate promptly, without a Democratic filibuster that would take 60 votes to break. Daschle opposes the bill's provision allowing oil drilling in part of ANWR.

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony J. Principi and Senators Frank Murkowski (R-AK), Larry Craig (R-ID), Rick Santorum (R-PA) and George Voinovich (R-OH)—who all support the energy legislation—joined the veterans groups at a news conference today.

American Legion National Commander Richard J. Santos wrote in his letter to Daschle: "War and international terrorism have again brought into sharp focus the heavy reliance of the United States on imported oil. During times of crises, such reliance threatens our national security and economic well being . . . It is important that we develop domestic sources of oil, contained within our public lands—such as the supplies within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge."

Robert E. Wallace, executive director of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, wrote Daschle: "By passing H.R. 4, the Senate will be supporting our troops serving in combat on Operation Enduring Freedom, the American people and our national security with a comprehensive energy legislation that is desperately needed to diversify the energy supply for our country and chart a course for the future."

J. Eldon Yates, chairman and founder of the Vietnam Veterans Institute wrote Daschle: "The development of America's domestic energy resources is vital to our national security. We respectfully urge you to immediately pass H.R. 4, the comprehensive energy legislation . . . Following the hor-

rific events of September 11, 2001, failure to pass this bill would pose a threat to our people, our economy, and our national security, that we all wore the uniform to maintain."

Also attending the news conference was Roger Thomas, 81, of Frederick, MD, who was a Navy radioman at Kaneohe Bay near Pearl Harbor when Japanese warplanes dropped bombs around him on December 7, 1941. Thomas was uninjured and went on to fly combat missions in World War II. "The terrorist attacks of September 11 were worse than the attack on Pearl Harbor, because unarmed civilians were murdered and many more died," Thomas said. "In World War II, America could produce all the oil we needed to fight back and defeat our enemies in battle, but today we're in a dangerous situation because we rely on other countries to provide our oil."

Today's military uses far more fuel than in past wars. For example, the 582,000 U.S. military personnel in the Persian Gulf War in 1991 consumed more oil on a daily basis than the 2 million men of the Allied armies that liberated Europe in World War II.

The United States gets about 55 percent of its oil from foreign nations—up steadily over the years from almost nothing during WWII, to 36 percent in 1973 and 46 percent as recently as 1991. America sends about \$100 billion a year to foreign nations to pay for imported oil.

Experts believe ANWR may contain the largest supply of oil ever found in American history—an estimated 16 billion barrels of recoverable oil, which could be turned into 742 billion gallons of gasoline. That's the equivalent of total U.S. gasoline consumption for nearly six years.

According to an analysis by Wharton Econometrics Forecasting Associates, development of oil reserves in the coastal plain of ANWR could create as many as 736,000 jobs in the United States—most of them outside Alaska—and pump billions of dollars into the U.S. economy.

ANWR covers 19.6 million acres, but the energy legislation before the Senate would open up only 1.5 million acres to exploration. Just a tiny fraction of that—about 2,000 acres of surface land—would experience oil drilling activity if oil were found.

STATEMENT OF OUR NATION'S VETERANS GROUPS

"OUR DOMESTIC ENERGY SECURITY IS OUR NATIONAL SECURITY"

We, the undersigned, representing our nation's veterans, strongly believe that the development of America's domestic energy resources is a vital national security priority. The horrific events of September 11, 2001, constitute a threat to our people, our economy, and our nation's security. With U.S. troops actively engaged in combat overseas, we firmly believe that America can and will win this prolonged war against terrorism, using all its resources to defend our nation and the cause of freedom around the world.

Because of these beliefs, we applaud the House of Representatives for its bipartisan work in addressing our energy vulnerability by passing H.R. 4, the "Securing America's Future Energy Act of 2001" or the "Safe Act of 2001." It is imperative that the Senate pass the House version of H.R. 4 so that our nation can move forward in establishing our energy security, as well as our defense of freedom at home and abroad. It is essential for us to develop all domestic energy resources including the supplies within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

By passing H.R. 4, the comprehensive energy legislation, the Senate will be sup-

porting our troops in the field, all Americans, their families, and our nation. We, as Veterans, stand united and respectfully request that the Senate vote on and pass H.R. 4.

J. ELDON YATES,
Chairman and Founder, Vietnam Veterans Institute.

JOSEPH SATRIANO,
National First Vice Commander, Catholic War Veterans of the United States of America.

VIETNAM VETERANS INSTITUTE,
October 30, 2001.

Hon. TOM DASCHLE,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate, the Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR DASCHLE: We write today out of a sense of urgency concerning our national security as it relates to our energy supply. The development of America's domestic energy resources is vital to our national security. We respectfully urge you to immediately pass H.R. 4, the comprehensive energy legislation.

We are pleased the House of Representatives, acting with bipartisan support, addressed our energy vulnerability by passing H.R. 4, the 'Securing America's Future Energy Act of 2001' or the 'SAFE Act of 2001.' It is imperative the Senate do the same. Following the horrific events of September 11, 2001, failure to pass this bill would pose a threat to our people, our economy, and our national security, that we all wore the uniform to maintain.

All Americans, as well as our military troops, need this legislation enacted into law. If we intend to rebuild our economy and continue the campaign against international terrorism and those who attack us, we must develop domestic sources of oil contained within our public lands—such as the supplies within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. We must be able to rely to the fullest extent possible on our own resources to provide for the maintenance of our economy at home and our prolonged war effort abroad.

By passing H.R. 4, the comprehensive energy legislation now, the Senate will be supporting our troops in the field and all working Americans, including those displaced by this heartless act of aggression. We, as Veterans, stand united and cannot overstate the importance of this legislation, and respectfully request you lead the Senate by voting on and passing H.R. 4 so our nation can move forward in defense of freedom around the world.

We know that when the chips are down, America can and will stand and fight, using all its resources and all its might to defend our nation and the cause of freedom around the world. Join us in this cause. Pass the comprehensive energy bill and help us rebuild America!

With the support of our members,
J. ELDON YATES,
Chairman and Founder, Vietnam Veterans Institute.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois.

THE RIGHT MEDICINE

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, President Bush's speech to the American people last night was exactly the right medicine. America is truly concerned over terrorism and bioterrorism and what it means to our country.

I listened carefully to the President's speech in Atlanta, GA. I thought he

struck the right tone. As concerned as we are—and we should be concerned—we take heart in the fact that this country has been strengthened by this crisis and this challenge. We have come together in what has been called the “re-United States of America.”

Many people understand patriotism from a different perspective than they did just a few weeks ago. We stand in awe, in respect, and in admiration of many heroes in America. The President acknowledged them last night—the firefighters in New York City and across America, the people who are in law enforcement, medical rescue teams, teachers, postal workers, and of course the men and women in uniform who daily put their lives on the line for America. It is appropriate that we remember them as we try to wrestle with our personal concerns about safety and security since September 11.

I thought the President struck just the right chord in calling on America to bring out the very best in our Nation.

Within the last several weeks, Congress has been called on by the President many times to provide him with the authority and the resources to deal with this crisis. Without exception, Congress has responded in a strong bipartisan manner in an effort to make certain the President and certainly the armed services have all they need to execute this war effectively.

This week, the Senate considered the intelligence authorization bill which gives additional resources to the intelligence community. This is an important component of our effective defense of America and defense of our values. As a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee, I know full well that one of the most heartening events that has occurred since September 11 is the fact that countries around the world are now cooperating with the United States in fighting terrorism. Some of those countries, which have been our closest allies for years, frankly, did not take this subject as seriously as they should have. Now they do. As they cooperate with us, we have an opportunity to reach out and try to stop the spread of terrorism across the world.

CONFLICT DIAMONDS ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, yesterday I had a press conference with two of my colleagues, Senator DEWINE of Ohio and Congressman TONY HALL of Ohio as well. We are cosponsors of legislation which deals with a phenomenon that has become increasingly important in this discussion.

It is not enough we search out Osama bin Laden and his lieutenants in their caves in Afghanistan and stop those cells of terrorist activity around the world. We have to find a way to starve them of the assets and resources they need to succeed. The President made it

clear this week that this has to be an immediate response by the United States. So as part of antiterrorism, we have created new authority to deal with money laundering—money laundering and transfers of money that have been used to finance the terrorist network.

A little over a week ago, though, we came to learn that there was another source for the terrorist operation. That source is diamonds. It appears that in west Africa in particular, and in Sierra Leone, where terrorist organizations have taken control of the production of diamonds, they are not only using these diamonds to promote their terrorism in west Africa, but they are exchanging these diamonds in international commerce among terrorist groups.

In Sierra Leone and other countries, we have seen absolutely barbaric conduct by these terrorists in west Africa. We have seen people who have been killed and mutilated, hundreds if not thousands of people who faced amputations of their hands, arms, legs, and feet as terrorist payback for their lack of loyalty to the terrorist cause.

How do these terrorists keep moving along? They are mining diamonds which eventually find their way into some of the most comfortable, democratic, and peaceful parts of this world.

We have introduced legislation, the Conflict Diamonds Act, which will require a certification of the country of origin for diamonds so we can starve out the diamonds that are coming out of west Africa and other places where they are supporting terrorism.

This is so important. It was important before September 11. It is more important now because we have come to learn that Osama bin Laden gathered these diamonds before September 11 as his way of bankrolling his terrorist operation. Diamonds do not leave a paper trail. A person with a handful of diamonds worth many thousands of dollars can stick them in his pocket or in a purse or in a packet and move through any metal detector, any security device undetected. That is a reality.

We have joined in a bipartisan fashion with the jewelry industry and with the diamond industry to promote the conflict diamonds bill to stop this illicit terrorist trade in diamonds.

The United States plays such a critical role when it comes to this issue. We in the United States import 65 percent of all the diamonds in the world. If we put strong standards in place and our allies who have joined us in this war against terrorism also pass similar standards, we can starve off a source of money, a source of terrorism that is clearly becoming rampant, even as we speak.

Diamonds have always been a symbol of enduring love. Unfortunately, today they have become the currency of ter-

rorism. I know the House Ways and Means Committee had a hearing on this bill last week. I am happy the Senate passed this bill earlier this year, and we are going to have to address it again.

I call on all my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, to consider this a matter of great urgency and join us in a bipartisan fashion. Senator FEINGOLD, Senator DEWINE, I, Congressman TONY HALL, and Congressman FRANK WOLF, in a true bipartisan fashion, have tried to move this important issue forward.

I close on this issue by giving special credit to Congressman TONY HALL, who has been a leader on this for years—not for months but for years. It is his good work that has brought us to this point. I am happy to be an ally of TONY HALL in any cause, but when it comes to a cause of this importance, I hope my colleagues will take a close look at this legislation.

AMERICA'S ECONOMY

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, as part of the challenge facing America today, we have to consider the state of America's economy, and it is a sad state of affairs. After almost 10 years of unparalleled prosperity in the history of the United States, during the past year we have seen terrible things occur—a massive growth in unemployment. The number of people who have been laid off across America is now reaching, unfortunately, historic levels. Last month saw the biggest 1-month increase in unemployment in 21 years. Nearly 7½ million Americans are now out of work, and the economists have warned us that a 1 or 2 million more may be losing their jobs over the next 12 months. Small and large businesses have faced this.

A friend of mine who deals with bankruptcies has told me we will be shocked as we hear the names of the major corporations and businesses which are going to go bankrupt in the near future. It is a fact of life this downturn in the economy is touching us in virtually every area of American life.

This is a time of year when many American businesses hope to show their greatest profit and success. This retail season around the holidays means so much to companies across America. Unfortunately, the sales are slow and the indication is clear that the American people are holding back. It is an understandable impulse on their part, understandable because they are not certain of their own stability in their job or their small business. They are uncertain about the future of our economy and, of course, the war which we are waging has led people to have a certain personal austerity, a little less flamboyance when it comes to their lifestyle. It is understandable. It reflects the spirit of sacrifice.